

VIII. FOR CONSCIENCE TO BE OF ANY REAL VALUE, TWO CONDITIONS ARE ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY:

1. One's reason or teaching must be correct. This depends wholly upon one's education and training --PAUL.
2. This places a tremendous responsibility on parents and teachers of the young--to see that they are properly trained, so they may form proper concepts of duty.
3. THE ONLY WAY THAT ONE CAN TRULY BE VOID OF OFFENSE IS TO BE IN ACCORD WITH GOD'S LAW, WHICH IS OUR ONLY RULE OF CONDUCT---THEN HIS CONSCIENCE WILL APPROVE OF IT AS THE RIGHT STANDARD.

4. One must exercise his conscience:

For this reason some people are truly miserable: They know what they should be doing, but will not do it--therefore their conscience condemns them.

This leads to a miserable life.

One who knows that he should not lie, will condemn and accuse himself when he lies.

One who knows that he should be attending every service, accuses himself when he refused to attend.

5. ONE WHO KNOWS HIS RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD THE GOSPEL, CONDEMNS HIMSELF BY REFUSING TO OBEY.

Groves, Tex 9/19/61

Bridg City, Tex 3/10/62

Vidor, Texas 9/12/65

2/29/76

Bridg City, TX 5/10/81

Abilene TX 3/17/91



## CONSCIENCE

### Introduction:

1. We hear a lot about man's conscience. Many have the belief that anything done in good conscience is all right.
2. The study of the subject "conscience" is a very important subject and cannot be emphasized too much.
3. Any appeal to the intellect of man that does not reach the conscience is wasted.
4. Even the devil knows the difference between right and wrong. No one ever accused him of "lack of knowledge", but his trouble is that he has no conscience. If an animal had as much knowledge as Satan it would be just as depraved--because it has no conscience. An animal can be taught just about everything, except remorse for wrong doings, no feeling here. The mule will kick the life out of his master and ~~keep~~ continue eating the corn--no conscience. *Some men are no better than mule*
5. Let us study a little more closely the conscience.

### BODY:

#### I. MAN IS THE ONLY CREATURE ON EARTH ENDOWED WITH A CONSCIENCE:

1. Just what it is, and what it does are questions which have caused ~~no~~ little controversy and conversation.
2. Some think that God guides man through the still small voice of Conscience to do right and refuse wrong.

#### II. WHAT IS CONSCIENCE???

1. According to Webster it is "the faculty, power, or inward principle which decides as to the character of one's action...warning against and condemning that which is wrong and approving that which is right...the moral faculty passing judgment on one's self"
2. Conscience in Latin--"con"--with, and "scientia"--to know, from whence we get the word science--HENCE: "to know with" or "joint knowledge" (*con- with - ois- to know*)
3. THAYER SAYS: It means "The consciousness of sin"--He then expands his meaning thus: "The soul distinguishing between what is morally good and bad...prompting to do the former and shun the latter, commending the one, and condemning the other."

#### III. WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF THE CONSCIENCE??? Note N.T.

1. Acts 23:1--"I have lived before God in all good consc...."  
Acts 24:16--"Herein do I exercise myself to have always a good conscience."  
2 Tim 1:3--"I thank God.....served....good conscience."
2. From these we note:  
A man may have "a good conscience"--"conscience void of offence"  
"served God in good conscience" and still be chief of sinners (1 Tim 1:15) CONSCIENCE NOT A SAFE GUIDE IN RELIGION

#### IV. THIS NATURALLY RAISES THE QUESTION: IS CONSCIENCE A GUIDE AT ALL?????

1. While the Gentiles were strangers from God and his covenant, Paul said--Rom 2:15--"Conscience bearing witness ....."  
Against Paul states--"I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing witness with me." Rom 9:1  
IN BEARING WITNESS, THEN, ONE'S CONSCIENCE DOES SO BY EITHER "ACCUISING" OR ELSE "EXCUSING" ONE.  
In other words, when a man's conduct is contrary to his sense of right, then his conscience will accuse or convict him. Paul says his conscience was bearing witness with him, he meant his conscience approved of what he did.

#### V. IT IS NOT THE PURPOSE OF THE CONSCIENCE TO DETERMINE WHAT IS RIGHT OR WHAT IS WRONG.

1. This belongs to the faculty of reason (being rightly taught).
2. An illustration will suffice:
  1. Take our civil courts, ~~the~~ *the* ~~law~~ *the* ~~of~~ *the* ~~the~~ *the* ~~the~~ *the*
  2. The court does not say what the law ought to be.
  3. This is the function of the legislature.
  4. The court seeks to determine what the law says, then decide what one's conduct ought to be in light of law.
  5. Just so with the conscience: It does not, and must not attempt to make the law, but in view of the law, the conscience acts and pronounces the verdict of guilty or not guilty.
  6. (The law states the correct rule of conduct and fixes the penalty for its violation. It is the business of the court to see that the law is enforced.)  
(So it is with the conscience.)
  7. The court would be powerless without the law.  
(Conscience would cease to function without the faculty of reason or guidance.)

#### VI. conscience varies according to knowledge and training:

1. Paul spoke about a "weak conscience"--or one that has not been properly trained or developed.
2. Then we have "pure conscience"--meaning one that has not become biased or warped by evil desires and appetites of the flesh.

#### VII. IT IS POSSIBLE FOR ONE'S CONSCIENCE TO BECOME SEARED.

1. 1 Tim 4:5--"Seared, as with a hot iron."
2. When cattle are branded with a hot iron, the sensor nerves are burned out, and the place becomes caloused over. No more feeling in it.
3. Just so, when one's conscience is burned or seared over. Paul says some "Who being past feelings gave themselves to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness and greedness."